

UTILITY APPLICATION

of

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For

UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT

On

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR
JEWELRY ORGANIZATION

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METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR JEWELRY ORGANIZATION

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

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[0001] This application claims priority from and is a continuation of copending application Ser. No. 08/766,862, filed December 13, 1996, which is herein incorporated by reference for all purposes.

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

[0002] The present invention relates to a method and apparatus for jewelry organization, and more particularly, to a method and apparatus for organizing and displaying several types of jewelry without tangling.

Description of the Related Art

[0003] Numerous boxes and organizers are known for storing or displaying jewelry. Such items are sold in an array of sizes and types. However, most jewelry boxes and organizers have limited space, crowding the jewelry when it is stored. This causes tangling of jewelry items, such as bracelets or necklaces. Jewelry items of length are a particular problem to store without crowding, mixing, or tangling. Hanging the jewelry does not adequately solve the tangling problem, and it requires a great deal of space to spread out the jewelry for view.

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[0004] Existing jewelry boxes and organizers commonly do not allow for additional items to be stored once their original space is filled. Another drawback is that many of these boxes and organizers do not accommodate all the types of jewelry available. This requires a person to purchase several boxes or organizers and to find room on shelves, dressers, or counter tops to store each of them.

[0005] Accordingly, there exists a need for a jewelry organizer which conveniently organizes and displays several types of jewelry in limited space while keeping bracelets and necklaces from tangling with each other. There is also a need for a jewelry organizer which allows for expansion for additional pieces of jewelry. The present invention fills these needs.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] Briefly, and in general terms, the present invention resides in a method and apparatus for jewelry organization which satisfies the above-identified needs by storing and displaying several types of jewelry while preventing the jewelry from tangling. The jewelry organizer has a body which is specially designed to avoid tangling of jewelry items and to house all types of jewelry at once, in an appealing fashion.

[0007] More particularly, the method and apparatus for jewelry organization of the present invention includes a body having an upper and lower surface, and a plurality of compartments formed in the upper surface. Each compartment is defined as an endless channel sized to receive one or more items of jewelry. In a

presently preferred embodiment, the channels may be formed concentrically to one another. The channels having the smallest circumferences can be used for holding small earrings, commonly stud or hoop earrings. The channels of medium length circumference can be used for watches, bracelets and other jewelry of similar length. A piece or strand of jewelry is placed in a channel of the length necessary to hold it. The channels having the larger diameters can be used for holding necklaces of varying lengths. Each piece of jewelry is matched to a channel of similar length so that the jewelry can be laid out along the path of the channel and does not mix or tangle with other pieces of jewelry.

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[0008] In another aspect of the invention, the upper surface of the body has an upwardly protruding knob. The knob is approximately sized to the diameter of a finger for holding rings. The knob may be frustoconical in shape and can hold at least one ring. The presently preferred knob is located in the center of the upper surface. The lower surface of the body may have a recess which is sized to receive a knob on a second jewelry organizer. The knob nests into the recess of another jewelry organizer so that the organizers can be stacked on top of one another. This allows a person to purchase additional jewelry organizers when needed to accommodate extra jewelry, without having to find additional space in a drawer or on a dresser or counter top.

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[0009] *In a further aspect of the invention, the jewelry organizer may have a rim around the periphery of the outermost compartment. The rim may include a lip which has a thickness less than the hook on a typical drop earring. This allows a drop earring to be hooked onto the lip. The rim also may have a substantially*

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flat surface and a width sufficient to display the earrings on the rim once they are hooked onto the lip.

5 [0010] Because the jewelry is stored in the separated channels in the jewelry organizer, the pieces do not get lost or tangled. Yet, the jewelry organizer has the capability of holding all types of jewelry, from rings, to watches, to bracelets, to earrings, and to necklaces of every length.

10 [0011] Other features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following description of the preferred embodiment, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, which illustrate, by way of example, the essence of the invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

15 [0012] The drawings illustrate a presently preferred embodiment of the invention, in which:

20 FIG. 1 shows a perspective view of a jewelry organizer apparatus and method in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a top view of the jewelry organizer shown in FIG. 1;

25 FIG. 3 is a cross-sectional view of the jewelry organizer, taken along lines 3--3 in FIG. 2, showing how it stacks on additional jewelry organizers indicated in phantom; and

FIG. 4 is an exploded perspective view of a jewelry organizer shown in combination with several other jewelry organizers.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

5 [0013] Referring now to the drawings, and particularly to FIG. 1 thereof, the present invention is embodied in a jewelry organizer, generally indicated by reference numeral 10. The jewelry organizer can be made from a single piece of clay, plastic, wood, or any other material capable of being fabricated into the design. The jewelry organizer has an upper surface 12 for storing and displaying 10 all types of jewelry, such as a necklace 14, drop earrings 16, and a ring 18. The upper surface 12 defines a plurality of compartments 20 for holding the jewelry. Each compartment is an endless channel 22 which is sized to hold jewelry and 15 keep it separate from other items of jewelry. A substantially flat rim 24 surrounds the periphery of the outermost compartment 26 and allows earrings to be hooked thereon. The jewelry organizer 10 has an upwardly protruding knob 28 for holding rings.

20 [0014] As shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, the body of the jewelry organizer is a round, plate-like structure 30, having a diameter of at least four inches. The preferable upper range of the diameter is twenty four inches. The plate-like structure includes a lower surface 32 for resting on a counter, table or dresser top. The knob 28 on the upper surface is located in the center of the plate-like 25 structure. The knob is approximately sized to the diameter of a finger so that at least one ring can be stacked on it. The knob could also hold hoop earrings or any other jewelry of similar proportion. Preferably, the knob has a frustoconical shape and a height taller than the upper surface.

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5 [0015] As referenced above with respect to FIGS. 1 and 2, the upper surface of the body has a plurality of compartments 20 defining endless channels 22. The channels are circular in shape and vary in diameter. The smaller diameter channels 34 lie within the channels having larger diameters 36. Thus, the channels are concentrically relative to each other and surround the knob. The number of channels can range from at least two up to eighteen, depending on the diameter of the jewelry organizer and the desired need.

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15 [0016] Referring now to FIG. 3, the knob 28 and the channels 22 are shown in more detail. The depth of each channel is sized for receiving at least one strand of jewelry in that channel. The width of each channel is approximately three-eighths of an inch, or at least adequately sized to hold a strand of jewelry. The innermost channel 38 is formed around the base of the knob and can be used to store small stud or hoop earrings. The channels in closer proximity to the knob have smaller diameters and smaller circumferences 34, and are ideally suited for holding items such as small earrings, watches, and bracelets. The outer channels, with larger diameters and larger circumferences 36, are ideally suited for holding various items of longer length, such as necklaces. Each channel is separated from the adjacent channel by the upstanding side walls of the channels 38. The top of each of the upstanding side walls 40 is approximately the same height and forms a portion to the top surface 12. The separated channels and the upstanding side walls prevent the stored items of jewelry from tangling with other items of jewelry.

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17 [0017] As further shown in FIG. 3, the lower surface 32 has a recess 42. The recess is designed with a frustoconical shape, similar to the shape of the

knob 28. The recess is aligned with and located on the underside of the knob. The recess is sized to receive a knob 44 from a second jewelry organizer 46. As shown in FIGS. 3 and 4, this enables the knob 44 on the second jewelry organizer 46 to nest into the recess 42 of the first jewelry organizer 10 and provides a means for 5 stacking 48 two organizers. This configuration allows a person to create more storage space by adding extra jewelry organizers when the original jewelry organizer is full. Because the jewelry organizers stack vertically 48, the configuration does not require any additional counter top space.

10 [0018] As shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, the rim 24 which extends around the periphery of the outermost compartment 26 is relatively wide to display earrings 16. The rim has a lip 50 at the circumferential edge of the rim. The thickness of the lip is slightly less than the width of a hook 52 on a typical drop earring 54 so that the earring can be hung on the lip by its hook. Preferably, the rim 24 is at 15 least two inches in width so that the earring 54, when hooked on the lip, can be positioned on the rim for display.

20 *AL* [0019] The invention has been described above in the terms of a presently preferred embodiment so that an understanding of the invention can be conveyed. There are, however, other configurations for the jewelry organizer not specifically described herein for which the present invention is applicable. Consequently, the present invention should not be seen as limited to the particular embodiment 25 described above. All modifications, variations, or equivalent arrangements that are within the scope of the attached claims should therefore be considered to be within the scope of the invention.